The attached Appendix includes marked-up copies of each rewritten claim (37 C.F.R. §1.121(c)(1)(ii)).

I. THE CLAIMS DEFINE ALLOWABLE SUBJECT MATTER

The Office Action rejects claims 1-21 under 35 U.S.C. §103 as unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,209,048B1 to Wolff (hereinafter "Wolff") in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,021,429 to Danknick et al. (hereinafter "Danknick"). The rejection is respectfully traversed. The Office Action admits that Wolff does not explicitly teach the claimed feature of at least two of the terminals each including an information obtaining means for automatically obtaining information on the other terminals therefrom and a transmitting means from transmitting to the controller together with information on the each terminal information obtained about the other terminals by the information obtaining means.

Danknick discloses a network device which operates in two modes: a list manager mode for maintaining a list of device addresses and a slave mode for providing a device address of the network device to another device on the network which maintains such a list (col. 1, lines 6-11). Danknick discloses that it solves the problem in that the cost and the complexity of the LAN are increased when an additional file server is introduced onto the LAN (col. 1, lines 29-39).

As shown in Fig. 1 of Danknick, NEB 2 is connected to other network devices in LAN (1). As shown in Fig. 5 of Danknick, when the NEB 2 is activated, the NEB 2 broadcasts a request to the other network devices to determine whether another network device on LAN 1 is operating as list manager for LAN 1.

In Danknick, once no response has been received, the NEB 2 is designated as list manager for LAN 1. If the NEB 2 receives a request for a list manager from another network device on LAN 1, the NEB 2 responds that the NEB 2 identifies itself as list manager. When the NEB 2 receives the request from another network devices, the NEB 2 receives

-4-

information such as device address from another network and stores it in DRAM 36 of NEB 2. (col. 9, line 7 - col. 10, line 45).

On the other hand, in Danknick, once a response has been received, the NEB 2 operates as a slave (col. 12, lines 1-8). Information of the NEB 2 is stored in a list manager, when the NEB 2 responds to a request from a network device which works as the list manager.

Also, in Danknick, when a user needs information on the respective network devices, the user accesses network device which works as list manager through a computer on the LAN 1 to obtain the information stored in the DRAM (36).

Furthermore, in Danknick, when a computer designates a specified terminal to forward a request, the terminal requests status information to the other terminals on the LAN. In response to the request, each terminal returns the status information to the specified terminal. Thus, in Danknick, a terminal functioning as server may be changed at each time of activation. On the other hand, in the claimed invention, the user designates the specified terminal for a server.

Further, in Danknick, the user must operate a computer to access a specified terminal in order to obtain necessary information. In the claimed invention, once the user sends a request by designating the specified terminal, the specified terminal automatically gathers the information on the respective terminals and sends the information which includes information on the specified terminal, to a computer operated by the user.

In Danknick, it is unclear as to whether the latest information can be obtained or not when the user desires the information on the respective terminals. Although the list manager can obtain information when the respective NEB is activated, it is necessary for Danknick to always update the information from the respective NEB in order to obtain the latest information. Accordingly, the method of Danknick may cause load to the network.

In accordance with the claimed invention, it is advantageous to always obtain the latest information since a request for information on the respective terminals is sent based on the user's need and the information can be obtained in response to the request. Further, since the claimed invention need not store the obtained information, it can reduce load of the terminals.
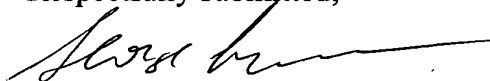
For at least these reasons, it is respectfully submitted that claims 1, 3, 8, 11, 15 and 17 are distinguishable over the applied art. Claims 2, 4-7, 9, 10, 12-14, 16 and 18-21, which depend from claims 1, 8, 11, 15 and 17, are likewise distinguishable over the applied art for at least the reasons discussed as well as for the additional features they recite. Withdrawal of the rejection under 35 U.S.C. §103 is respectfully requested.

II.   CONCLUSION

For at least the reasons discussed above, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further is desirable in order to place the application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the Applicant's undersigned representative at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

James A. Oliff
Registration No. 27,075

George P. Simion
Registration No. 47,089

JAO:GPS/rrs

Attachments:
     Appendix
     Petition for One Month Extension of Time
Date: January 24, 2002

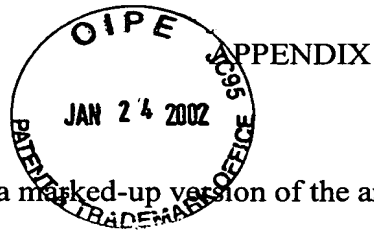**OLIFF & BERRIDGE, PLC**
P.O. Box 19928
Alexandria, Virginia 22320
Telephone: (703) 836-6400

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APPENDIX

Changes to Claims:

The following is a marked-up version of the amended claims 1, 3, 8, 11, 15 and 17:

1.   (Amended) A network system comprising:

a plurality of terminals interconnected via a network; and

a controller controlling the terminals via the network;

at least one of the terminals, as designated by a user, including an information

obtaining means for automatically obtaining information on the other terminals therefrom,

and a transmitting means for transmitting to the controller together with information on the at

least one terminal and the obtained information on the other terminals by the information

obtaining means.

3.   (Amended) A network system comprising:

a plurality of terminals interconnected via a network; and

a controller controlling the terminals via the network;

at least two of the terminals, as designated by a user, each including an

information obtaining means for automatically obtaining information on the other terminals

therefrom, and a transmitting means for transmitting to the controller together with

information on the each terminal and the information obtained about the other terminals by

the information obtaining means;

the controller including a selecting means for selecting one of the at least two

terminals, a requesting means for requesting the transmitting means of the terminal selected

by the selecting means to transmit to the controller the information on all the interconnected

terminals, and a switching means for switching from the selected terminal to the other or

another of the at least two terminals.

8.   (Amended) A network system comprising:

A-1

a plurality of terminals interconnected via a network; and

a control computer controlling the terminals via the network;

at least one of the terminals, as designated by a user, including a controller for automatically obtaining information on the other terminals therefrom and transmitting the obtained information on the other terminals together with and information on the at least one terminal to the computer.

11.   (Amended) A user-designated terminal for connecting via a network to a plurality of other terminals, the user-designated terminal comprising:

an information obtaining means for automatically obtaining information on the other terminals therefrom; and

a transmitting means for transmitting to the network together with information on the user-designated terminal the and information obtained about the other terminals by the information obtaining means.

15.   (Amended) A process for controlling by means of a controller connected to a network a plurality of terminals connected to the network, the process comprising the steps of:

selecting one of the terminals;

causing the selected terminal to automatically obtain information on the other terminals; and

causing the selected terminal to transmit the obtained information on the other terminals together with and information on the selected terminal to the controller.

17.   (Amended) A recording medium that stores a program for execution by a controller in a network system including a plurality of terminals interconnected via a network and controlled by the controller via the network,

at least two of the terminals <u>designated by a user</u> being each adapted to obtain

information on the other terminals therefrom, and transmit the obtained information on the

other terminals ~~together with~~<u>and</u> information on the each terminal to the controller,

the program including the steps of:

selecting one of the at least two terminals; and

requesting the selected terminal to transmit the information on all the

terminals to the controller.